

**COMPLIMENT EXPRESSIONS AND COMPLIMENT
RESPONSES USED BY CHARACTERS IN “LITTLE WOMEN”
NOVEL**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Getting Bachelor Degree of
Education in English Department**

By

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DECLARATION

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Surakarta, June 2017

The Researcher



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COMPLIMENT EXPRESSIONS AND COMPLIMENT RESPONSES USED BY CHARACTERS IN “LITTLE WOMEN” NOVEL

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi kategori-kategori ekspresi dalam pujian, mendeskripsikan fungsi-fungsi yang digunakan dalam pujian dan mengklasifikasikan respons dari pujian yang digunakan oleh karakter-karakter dalam novel *Little Women*. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Wolfson (1983) untuk menganalisis kategori dan fungsi pujian, serta menggunakan teori Herbert (1989) untuk menganalisis respons dari pujian.

Berdasarkan analisis data, hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan terdapat 48 data yang mengandung ungkapan pujian dan 33 data yang mengandung respons dari pujian. Terdapat 4 kategori pujian yang digunakan karakter-karakter dalam novel *Little Women*, yaitu 10 data pada pujian penampilan (21%), 7 data pujian kepemilikan (15%), 16 data pada pujian kemampuan (33%), dan 15 data pada pujian terhadap aksi tertentu (31%). Serta ada 6 fungsi dalam pujian yang digunakan dalam novel *Little Women* yaitu 15 data untuk mengekspresikan ketertarikan, 9 data untuk menguatkan kebiasaan, 8 data untuk memperhalus ungkapan syukur dan selamat, 7 data untuk menjaga persahabatan, 5 data untuk membuka percakapan, dan 4 data untuk memperhalus kritik dan permintaan. Selain itu, ada 7 respons pujian yang diungkapkan dalam novel *Little Women* yaitu Tidak berhubungan; Pujian diterima; Merendahkan; Pujian diterima dengan penambahan; Ketidaksetujuan; Pengembalian; dan Pengembalian pada objek lain.

Kata kunci : kategori pujian, fungsi pujian, respons terhadap pujian,

Abstract

This study aimed to identify the topics of compliment, describe the functions of compliment and classify the responses of compliment used by the characters in “*Little Women*” novel. The method used descriptive qualitative to analyze the data. This research used Wolfson’s theory (1983) to analyze the topics and functions of compliment, and used Herbert’s theory (1989) to classify the compliment responses.

Based on the data analysis, the results of this research showed that there are 48 data containing compliments and 33 data containing responses of compliment. There are 4 the topics of compliment used by characters in “*Little Women*” novel, 10 data on personal appearance (21%), 7 data on possession of appearance (15%), and 16 data general ability (33%), and 15 data on specific

act ability (31%). There are 6 functions of compliments used by characters in “*Little Women*” novel to express admiration or approval with the data is 15 data (31%); to reinforce desired behavior with 9 of 48 data; the functions of compliment to soften replace gratitude and congratulations with 8 data of 48 data (17%); to maintain solidarity with 7 data (15%); to open and sustain conversation with 5 data (10%); whereas the lowest frequency is to soften face threatening acts in critique and request with the frequency 4 data (8%). There are 7 responses of compliment such as, No Acknowledgement; Appreciation Token; Praise Downgrade; Comment Acceptance; Disagreement; Return; and Reassignment.

Keywords: topics of compliment, functions of compliment, compliment responses

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is one of communication tools that very important for our life. People use language to communicate and interact with the other. People create language by forming words which have meaning and can be understood to all people. They use language to make the hearer understood of aim and intention. Communication in a language will be clear not only recognizing the meaning of word also recognizing what speakers mean by their utterances. But, not every people understand the purpose, information, or intention of a speaker or writer utterances. They have to learn to know what the speaker’s intended. The study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by listener or reader called pragmatics (Yule, 1996).

Pragmatics is related with assumptions and interpretations of the speaker’s utterance. People produce utterance as a perform action not only containing grammatical structure and words. Pragmatics is “the study of “invisible” meaning and how a speaker identifies of what is meant even when it is not actually said or written” (Yule, 1996, p.183). It is the study of how meaning depends on context. Pragmatics theory divided into some parts; include deixis, presupposition, implicature, and speech acts.

Austin (1962) defined speech acts as an action performed in saying something. Speech acts is an action performed by utterance (Yule, 1996). Based on Austin and Yule definition, speech acts is an action performed when the

speaker saying something or through language. Austin distinguished speech acts into three levels of the act of utterance, there are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts (Austin, 1969).

Searle (1969) divided speech acts into five classification for illocutionary acts, they are declaratives, commissives, expressives, representatives or assertives, and directives. One of speech acts classification by Searle is expressive utterances. Yule (1996) explained expressive is kind of speech acts that state what the speaker feels or relate with psychological states. Expressive utterances are the expression of pleasure, compliment, pain, dislikes, sorrow, joy, or likes. For the example, “*That’s a very beautiful dress.*”. It is means of praising or compliment that uttered by the speaker to someone.

A part of expressive utterances is compliment expressions. Compliments are positive speech acts that express friendship and increase rapport among people. Compliment expression can be found in daily life or movie, drama, short story, or novel. One of novel that contains expressive utterances is Little Women novel by Louisa May Alcott. It is a family drama that validates virtue over wealth. This novel is loosely based on the writer’s own life, semi-autobiography of Louisa May Alcott. Little Women is coming age story that begins in second civil war America. It is about life and growth of the four March’s girls, Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy.

The novel of Louisa May Alcott entitled “Little Women” contains many compliment expressions and responses. The compliment expressions are explained in many ways, it depends on the character. Here is the example of compliment expression and its response is applied by the characters, the conversation between Jo and Beth.

M : *‘It’s the best we’ve had yet,’ said Meg, as the dead villain sat up and rubbed his elbows.*

B : **‘I don’t see how you can write and act such splendid things, Jo. You’re a regular Shakespeare!’** *exclaimed Beth, who firmly believed that her sisters were gifted with wonderful genius in all things.*

J : **‘Not quite,’** *replied Jo modestly.*

Based on the novel, the conversation takes place in Mrs. March house, when Mrs. March's daughters prepare for Christmas day. Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy made a plan to give a surprise in Christmas to their mother. Jo asked her sisters to make a drama and to give surprise. Meg, Beth and Amy were the actress of Jo's scenario. After they did Jo's scenario, Beth felt that Jo acted great things. Beth gave praise to Jo, with a sentence "*You're a regular Shakespeare*". The utterance above is a compliment of general ability that show a character appearance and the function of Beth sentence is to reinforce desired behavior of Jo's Work, and the compliment responses is praise downgrade (disagreeing), because the addressee (Jo) disagree that the object complimented is not worthy of praise with a response '*Not quite*'.

There was many previous study analyzed compliment and compliment responses in daily life, film or social media, but there is no previous study analyze compliment and compliment responses in novel. The researcher interested to conduct the research because the difference characters found in "Little Women" novel makes the way to delivered compliment expression in every character is different, the researcher tries to analyze in the form of thesis entitled *Compliment Expressions and Compliment Responses Used by Characters in "Little Women" Novel*.

The researcher focuses on the topics and functions of compliment expressions and compliment responses in "Little Women" novel by Louisa May Alcott. The data will be analyzed using topics and function of compliments by Wolfson (1983) and compliment responses by Herbert (1996).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher uses qualitative research in conducting the research employ descriptive method. The object of this study is "compliment expressions and compliment responses " used by the characters (Mrs. March, Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy, Mr.Laurence, Mr.Brooke, Hannah and Laurie) in "Little Women" novel including topics of compliments, functions of compliments and the compliment

responses. The data will be analyzed based on compliment expressions and the functions of compliment proposed by Wolfson's theory and Manes's theory and compliment responses by Herbert's theory.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

a. The Topics of Compliment

Wolfson (1983) divided the topics of compliments into two categories, they are the topic of appearance and the topic of ability. Every topic is divided into two types, they are personal appearance, possession in topics of appearance, and general ability, and specific act ability in topics of ability. In Little Women novel, the topics of compliment used by characters are personal appearance, possession of appearance, and general ability, and specific act ability.

Based on the findings, the researcher found 48 data that used the topics of compliment. The examples are as follow:

1) Personal Appearance

You always look *like an angel in white*,' said Amy
(13/A-B/048/LW)

2) Possession Appearance

I never had such *a fine bouquet before! How pretty it is!*'
(10/M-MM/038/LW)

3) General Ability

You're a regular Shakespeare!' exclaimed Beth
(01/B-J/012/LW)

4) Specific Acts Ability

How nicely you do it! Jo
(12/J-L/049/LW)

There are 48 data that use the topics of compliment, topic of appearance and topic of ability. The highest frequency is general ability with the percentage 33% out of the total data. There are 15 data on specific act

ability (31%), 10 data on personal appearance (21%) and 7 data on possession appearance (15%). It can be concluded that the topics of compliment on general ability most often used by the characters in *Little Women*.

b. The Functions of Compliment

According to Wofson and Manes (1983), there are six functions of compliment, such as to express admiration or approval, to maintain solidarity, to soften replace greetings/ gratitude/ apologies/ congratulations, to soften face threatening acts, to open and sustain conversation, and to reinforce desired behavior. Based on the data analysis, there are six functions of compliment that used in the novel.

Based on the data, the functions of compliment with the highest frequency is to express admiration or approval with the data is 15 of 48 data (31%); the next position is to reinforce desired behavior with 19% or 9 out of the total of data; the functions of compliment to soften replace gratitude and congratulations with 8 data of 48 data (17%); to maintain solidarity with 7 data of 48 data (15%); the functions of compliment to open and sustain conversation with 5 data of 48 data (10%); whereas the lowest frequency is to soften face threatening acts in critique and request with the frequency 4 of 48 data (8%).

c. The Compliment Responses

Herbert (1989) classified 12 types of the compliment responses. There are Agreement (*Appreciation token, Comment Acceptance, Comment History, Praise Upgrade (often sarcastic Reassignment, Return)*), Nonagreement (*Question (Query or challenge), Qualification Disagreement, No Acknowledgment*), and Other Interpretation (*Request Interpretation*). Based on 48 data of compliment used in “*Little Woman*” novel, 15 data have no compliment responses.

Based on the analysis, the responses of compliment with the highest frequency that often used by the characters is No Acknowledgement (NA) with the data is 11 of 33 data (33%); Appreciation Token (AT) 8 of 33 data

(24%); Praise Downgrade (PD) 5 of 33 data (15 %); Comment Acceptance (CA) 4 of 33 data (12%); Disagreement (Dis) 3 of 33 data (9 %); Return (Re) 1 of 33 data (3 %); and the lowest is Reassignment (Ra) 1 datum of 33 data (3%). There is no compliment responses in Question, Request, Praise Upgrade, Comment History, Qualification used in the novel.

4. CONCLUSION

a. The Topics of Compliment

The characters in *Little Women* novel employ two topics of compliment, namely the topic of appearance and topic of ability. Every topics divided into two types, they are personal appearance, possession in topics of appearance, and general ability, and specific act ability in topics of ability. This research found 48 data containing of the topics of compliment. The highest frequency is general ability, and the lowest frequency is possession appearance. This research shows that the topics of compliment on general ability most often used by the characters in *Little Women*.

b. The Functions of Compliment

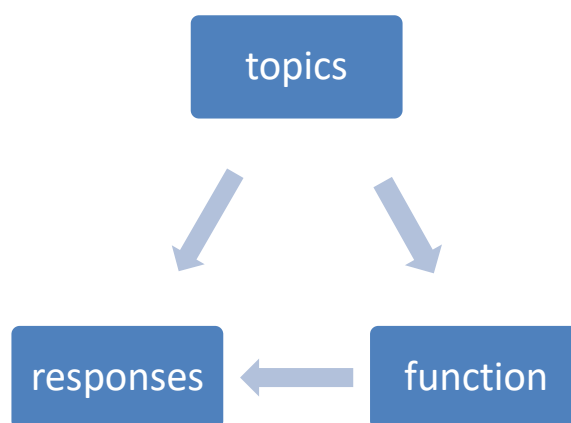
According to Wofson and Manes (1983), there are six functions of compliment, such as to express admiration or approval, to maintain solidarity, to soften replace greetings/ gratitude/ apologies/ congratulations, to soften face threatening acts, to open and sustain conversation, and to reinforce desired behavior. This research found six functions that are employed in *Little Women* novel. The functions of compliment with the highest frequency is to express admiration or approval whereas the lowest frequency is to soften face threatening acts in critique and request.

c. The Compliment Responses

Following Herbert's classification, the characters in *Little Women* novel employ 7 compliment responses. This research found 33 data

containing of the the responses of compliment, there are the compliment responses No Acknowledgement; Appreciation Token; Praise Downgrade; Comment Acceptance); Disagreement; Return; and the lowest is Reassignment. There is no compliment responses in Question, Request, Praise Upgrade, Comment History, Qualification used in the novel. The compliment responses No Acknowledgement, Appreciation Token and Praise Downgrade often used by the characters in *Little Women*.

d. The Relation of the Findings



The topics of compliment is related with the function of compliment. The data analysis shows the topics of compliment determine the function of compliment. For example the topics of compliment found in the novel, almost of the topics of appearance refer to the function to express admiration. The functions of compliment influence the compliment responses. The data analyses show that the functions of compliment determine the way characters in *Little Women* novel in giving responses. For example when the characters show the compliment to express admiration, the responses usually accept the compliment.

The responses of compliment depend on the topics of compliment. The data analyses show that the topics uttered by the characters give different responses. For example, the topics of ability in the novel get a praise

downgrade response whereas the topics of appearance get appreciation responses.

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